



Public Service Commission

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Rory M. Christian, Chair

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PSC Approves New Area Code in 845 Region

**Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster,
and Westchester Counties to Exhaust Supply of Telephone Numbers by Third
Quarter of 2023**

ALBANY — The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) announced that an additional area code overlay has been authorized for all or portions of Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester counties in response to the North American Numbering Plan Administrator's (NANPA) forecast of a shortage of telephone numbers in the 845-area code. The new area code is expected to be activated before the third quarter of 2023.

"As the economy continues to grow, and the need for more cellular service becomes apparent, there is a greater need for an additional telephone area code number," **said Commission Chair Rory M. Christian.** "I am confident that this new area code overlay will be able to address the needs of expanded telecommunication services in the mid-Hudson region in the years ahead."

In accordance with standard telephone industry guidelines, NANPA's projection forecasts the current 845 area code will exhaust available numbers in the third quarter of 2023. Per the petition, all existing wireline and wireless telephone customers in the overlay area would retain their current 845 area code and telephone numbers. The new area code would cover requests for new phone numbers.

The proposed new area code will be implemented six months prior to the projected third quarter of 2023 exhaust date. The implementation of a new overlay area code normally requires concurrent implementation of mandatory 10-digit dialing (the three-digit area code and seven-digit telephone number are required to complete a call) for all calls, whether local or long-distance.

However, by the time the proposed 845 overlay area code becomes effective, customers in the 845-area code will already have transitioned to mandatory 10-digit dialing due to the national

implementation of the “988” three-digit hotline to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline which is currently underway and scheduled to be completed by July 16, 2022. Therefore, certain customer education and industry technical milestones will not be needed in this case, and the timeline to implement the proposed area code will be shorter than in past overlay code cases.

An overlay is the appropriate means of providing numbering relief for the 845 Number Planning Area (NPA), given the prior successful overlays that have been implemented in New York over the past two decades. The overlay has a projected life of approximately 28 years.

With the Commission’s decision, all existing 845 area wireline and wireless telephone customers in the overlay area will retain their current 845 area code and telephone numbers, i.e., the new area code would cover requests for new phone numbers once the 845 NPA is fully exhausted.

The overlay will result in long-term relief, with the least expense disruption and confusion to consumers. On implementation of the overlay code, 10-digit dialing would be required for all local calls within and between the 845 NPA and the new NPA. In this instance, though, the new area code will not affect the number of digits dialed by customers in the 845 NPA, because 845 customers are already transitioning to 10-digit dialing.

Today’s decision may be obtained by going to the Commission’s Documents section of the Commission’s Web site at www.dps.ny.gov and entering case number 21-C-0600 in the input box labeled “Search for Case/Matter Number”. Many libraries offer free Internet access. Commission documents may also be obtained from the Commission’s files Office, 14th floor, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500). If you have difficulty understanding English, please call us at 1800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this press release.